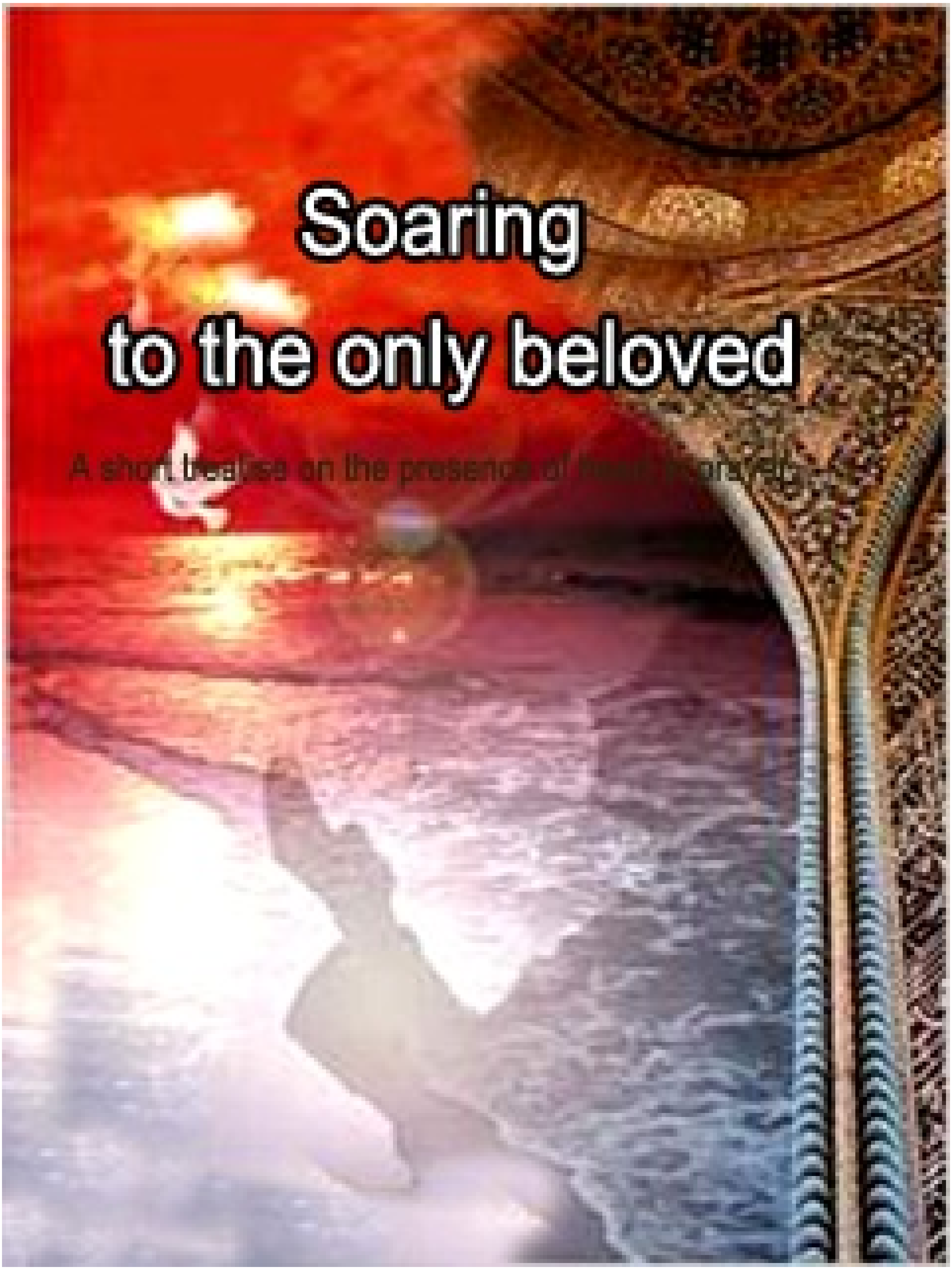

Soaring
to the only beloved
A short treatise on the presence of

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Soaring to the Only Beloved A short treatise on the presence of heart in prayer

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point

This concise treatise is aimed at making us realize the necessity, possibility, and .(methodology of attaining this vital spirit of prayer (Salat

Dedication

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

O Allah, I humbly present this short treatise to our beloved guide, Imam Ali (`a)-Imam al-Arifin (the doyen of the saints), whose total attention to the Only Beloved in prayers was not deterred even by the removal of an arrow that had pierced his .blessed foot

Qum al-Muqaddasah

In the close Neighborhood of the ever resplendent lady, Fatima, named by her brother- Imam Ali al-Rida (`a), as al-Ma'suma (the infallible one) may Allah imbue our hearts with intense love for her, and may He emancipate us by her intercession. Amin

Preface

In the Name of Allah, the All Merciful, the Ever Merciful

:The Holy Qur'an says

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّکَ کَادِحٌ إِلَی رَبِّکَ کَدْحاً فَمُلَاقِيهِ

,O Human being

Surely you are striving

Towards your Lord

,Laboriously

(And you shall meet Him(۱)

.Addressed to the Human being

The Human Being is struggling on a path

The path leads to His Lord

The struggle is laborious

He would meet His Lord

Rumi in his celebrated masterpiece, Mathnawi metaphorically and in a beautiful style begins by narrating the speech of the human soul who is at pain and yearns to return :back to his dwelling of peace

,Hearken to the reed-flute(۲), how it complains

:Lamenting its banishment from its home

,Ever since they tore me from my osier bed"

My plaintive notes have moved men and women to

۱- Holy Qur'an, ۸۴:۶

۲- Reed Flute is a metaphor for the Human soul- See commentary of Mathnawi by

.tears

,I burst my breast, striving to give vent to sighs

.And to express the pangs of my yearning for my home

.He who abides far away from his home Is ever longing for the day he shall return

The abode of the human being and his true home is somewhere else. He is a stranger in this world in the true sense of the word and his place is the proximity and nearness of the only Beloved. So long as he resides in the straits of this realm, the pain of separation has always to remain. It is by the wings of knowledge and action that the bird of his spirit can leave the cage of material attachment and fly to the realm of the Beloved. But he needs to know the way and style to soar to the abode of peace to :which the Beloved himself invites him

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِى مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

And Allah continually Invites

To the abode of peace

And continually Guides whosoever

He wants

(To the straight path(١

As long as he has not deciphered the true path, which the Holy Qur'an calls "sirat al-mustaqim" (the straight path), he should never dream to migrate to his hometown. The Beloved, who yearned that his lovers return to His neighborhood where their homes lay, sent His messengers so that they may guide the birds of perplexity to their .destination

Among the fundamental methods that these guides of the human being taught was prayer. Salat - a Divinely inspired mode of prayer taught

Holy Qur'an, ۱۰:۲۵ -۱

by the Holy Prophet (s)- is a method and an opportunity to fly and soar to one's destination. If the human being utilizes this opportunity that comes ۵ times a day, his .journey would undoubtedly commence

Why should he allow several opportunities during his life time to go to waste? Doesn't he yearn deep in his heart for the company of the Beloved? Doesn't he realize that it is high time he should go back home and enjoy the neighborhood of the only Beloved ?who intensely loves his company

Those who have tried to seek help by this vehicle of spiritual ascent may complain about its ineffectiveness, since it has not yet made them reach their destination. To them must be said that 'No imaginary vehicle can transport you to your destination.' If the human being prays observing the outer as well as inner etiquette of prayer he surely will attain success in comprehending his much longed abode. It is the negligence of the heart in prayer that makes the prayer devoid of its spirit and .destroys the opportunity of the human being

As we shall see in this small treatise, the presence of heart (huduru'l qalb) is one of the most fundamental conditions of prayer, without which the prayer lays a negative or no effect on the supplicant. Appreciating its importance, one should try to observe the same and always struggle in this noble venture. Obviously the task is challenging and difficult in the beginning, but with continual struggle and

steadfastness in bridling the faculty of imagination of the human being and detaching the human soul from temporal inclinations, one can slowly and gradually attain the .state of complete absorption in prayer

This concise treatise is a humble attempt aimed at making us realize the necessity, possibility, and methodology of attaining this vital spirit of prayer. May Almighty Allah enable us achieve the same, so that we can join the flocks who are busy soaring to the realm of their Beloved and are very anxious to meet Him. If we show laxity in this sublime aspiration, 'the state of perpetual regret' in the Hereafter would be of no use .to us

,All praises solely belong to Allah-the Absolute Perfect Being

.The Lord of the World of Dependent Existence

,Utterly destitute to Almighty Allah

Abu Muhammad Zaynu' l ` Abidin

Holy Proximity of Bibi Ma'suma (` a) - Qum-al-Mugaddasa

Introduction

point

إِنِّی وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِیَ لِلَّذِی فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ حَنِیفاً وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِکِینَ

Surely I have turned my face to Him

;Who originated the heavens and the earth, being upright

(and I am not of the polytheists. (۱

Attention is the concomitant of conversation. Every sound human being enjoys attention when transmitting his thoughts to his addressee. Such attention neither requires laborious thought processes nor any kind of exertion for the control of the movement of the mind. When one wishes to convey something, the mind translates it

to its respective words and the tongue reveals the same. One, however, would need to bridle his tongue to avoid uttering all what is forbidden or

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Holy Qur'an, ۶:۷۹ -۱

.futile

Most of the speech in prayer is from a Divine source, and hence bridling does not make any sense. Instead, the musalli is required to ensure that his attention is continuously focused on the act of worship or the Worshipped One, and that the words of his prayer originate from the depths of his heart and the heights of his mind.

This is where many are overcome by the bird of imagination, which has habituated itself to fly from one branch of the tree of material attachments to another. Consequently, the worshipper gets deprived of the progress and spiritual development he could acquire through this most effective means of attaining God's proximity.

It is difficult for one to immediately achieve and maintain this praiseworthy and necessary state of attention in prayer. One has to cross certain levels of attention before enjoying a natural conversation with the Beloved.

In the present treatise we shall briefly try to discuss the following vital issues concerning attention in prayer:

Sections Covered

۱. The necessity of attention in prayer

۲. The possibility of attention in prayer

۳. Levels of attention in prayer

۴. Hurdles on the way to attention in prayer and their removal.

۵. Suggested methods of achieving attention in prayer.

۶. The effect of maintaining one's attention in prayer.

Part ۱: The Necessity of Attention in Prayer

point

How can the attention of the heart and the expression of humility not be the spirit of the prayer and (how can) the perfection of prayer not depend upon them, while the ?musalli in his prayer and supplication whispers to his Lord

Mawla –

Narraqi

:The Holy Qur'an says

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلاهَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ

O you who believe

Do not near prayers in the state of intoxication

until you know what you say (١)۵

:The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said

ايها الناس ان المصلى اذا صلى فانه يناجى ربه تبارك وتعالئ فليعلم بما يناجيه

O mankind

,Surely when the worshipper (musalli) prays

He whispers(٢) unto his Blessed and Almighty Lord

(Therefore he must know that with which he whispers. (٣

Rational Evidence

Prayer is a kind of worship taught to the human being by his Lord through Revelation to enable him attain His proximity. It consists of a set of actions and expressions, most of which clearly declare the immaculate nature of God.

A set of expressions, therefore, form an important part of the daily prayer. And clearly, the act of expression cannot really be known to be so if the heart is oblivious of what the tongue utters. Therefore, attention is a necessary concomitant of expression, and hence is also necessary in prayer.

:Mawla al-Naraqi in his ethical opus, Jami' al-Sa'adat says

وكيف لا يكون حضور القلب والخشوع روح الصلاه ولا يتوقف كمال الصلاه عليه, مع ان المصلى فى صلاته ودعائه مناج ربه؟

ولا شک ان الکلام مع الغفله لیس بمناجاه, وایضا الکلام اعراب عما فی الضـمیر, ولا یتاتی الاعراب عما فی الضـمیر الا بحضور القلب, فای سؤال فی قوله: (اهدنا الصراط المستقیم) اذا کان القلب غافلا؟ ولاشک ایضا ان المقصود من القراءه و الاذکار الثناء والحمد و التضرع و الدعاء, و المخاطب هو الله - تعالی-, فاذا کان

۱- Holy Qur'an ۴:۴۳

۲- There is subtle point implied in this holy narration. The musalli 'whispers' and not merely engages in any kind of communication with His Rabb (Lover, Creator, Possessor, Sustainer and Trainer). The act of 'whispering' refers to a special kind of conversation, where the secretive feelings of the heart are expressed near the beloved, and a sense of amity is experienced. Who is this Omnipotent Beloved to Whom every element is dependent at every moment of its existence, and who knows all the misdeeds of His sinful slave, yet He permits him to whisper to Him several times a day?

۳- Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal, Musnad Ibn Hanbal, v.۲, p.۴۸۳, tr. ۶۱۳۵, Dar alFikr, Beirut, ۲nd ed.

القلب العبـد محجوبـا عنه بحجـاب الغفله , ولا. يراه ولا يشاهـد, بل كان غافلا عن المخاطب , ويحرك لسانه بحكم العاده , فما ابعد هذا عن المقصود با لصلاه التى شرعت لتصقيل القلب وتجديد ذكر الله...

How can the presence of the heart and the expression of humility not be the spirit of the prayer and (how can) the perfection of prayer not depend upon them, while the worshipper (musalli) in his prayer and supplication whispers to his Lord? There is no doubt that speech along with absent-mindedness is not the act of whispering.

In addition, speech is an expression of what is in the heart or mind, and this is impossible save by means of the attention of the heart; for what (really) does the supplicant ask when he says: 'Guide us on the straight path' while the heart is inattentive? And there is no doubt also that the purpose behind Qur'an-recitation and invocations (adhkar) is the act of laudation, praise, the expression of one's humility and supplication while the addressee is the Almighty Allah.

If the heart of the servant, therefore, was veiled from Him by the curtain of inattentiveness, and did not see or witness Him, but rather was inattentive of the addressee, and he moved his tongue out of (mere) habit, how remote then, is this, from the purpose behind prayer which was legislated for the refinement of the heart and renewal of one's remembrance of God...(١)

Qur'anic Evidence

point

In addition, the following verse implies that the reason behind the

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١- Mawla Muhammad Mahdi Naraqi, Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ٣, p. ٣٢٥.

prohibition of prayer in the state of intoxication is the worshipper's ignorance of what :he utters

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ

,O you who believe

Do not near prayers in the state of intoxication

(Until you know what you say (١

Hence were he to pray in that state, he would utter statements the meaning of which .he is oblivious

An Etymological Discussion

Were we to reflect carefully on this verse, we would come to realize its universality: etymologically سكر sukran) and the word) سكران sukara) is the plural of) سكارئ the word :means

...هو الحيلوله فى جريان طبيعى بحيث يتحصل جريان خلاف ماكان...ومنها السكر الحاصل فى جريان التعقل التفكر...

interruption in a natural process, such that a course contrary to it follows ...and of..." sukr)) that comes about in the (natural) process of) سكر) its extensions is intoxication (thinking and intellection..." (٢

The late mystic-scholar Sultan 'Ali, in his Qur'an commentary Bayan al- Sa'ada Fi :Maqamat al-'Ibada says

والسكر من السكر بمعنى السد ويسمى الحاله الحاصله من استعمال شىء من السكرات سكرا لسدها طرق تصرف العقل فى القوى وطرق انقياد القوى للعقل, ولا- اختصاص لها بالخمر العينبيه المعروفه بل كل مايحصل من تلك الحاله شربا او اكلا او تدخينا او غير ذلك فهو خمر النفس سواء حصل منه السكر المعروف كا الفقاع والمعصيرات المتخذه من غير العنب وكالبنج و الجرس والافيون او لا- كالحرص و الامل والحب و الشهوه والغضب و الحسد و البخل و الغم و الفرح والنعاس والكسل الغاليه بحيث يغلب مقتضاها على مقتضى العقل بل الحاله الحاصله المانعه من نفاذ

۱- Holy Qur'an, ۴:۴۳.

۲- Mustafawi, al-Tahqiq, vo۱.۵, pp.۱۶۰-۱۶۱

حکم العقل وتدبیره سکر النفس من ای شیء کانت ومن ای سبب حصلت

The word 'sukr' stems from the word 'sakr' meaning 'encumbrance;' and the state gotten by taking an intoxicant is known as 'sukr' because it encumbers and closes the channels of the intellect's influence on the other faculties of the human being and (hinders) the paths of their subordination to it.

And intoxicants do not specifically relate to the well-known brandy (for example); rather, all those things through which the state of intoxication is attained, whether by means of drinking, eating, smoking or other than that, are called the intoxicants of the nafs, no matter whether the common intoxication that comes about through the intake of beer and extracts gotten from other than grapes and the usage of narcotics and opium, is attained thereby or not.

An example of the latter is when intoxication comes about through overwhelming greed, hope, love, desire, anger, jealousy, stinginess, sorrow, happiness, slumber or laziness, such that the requisites of these characteristics overpower the dictate of the intellect; rather (any) state gotten that hampers the execution of the intellect's command and control is sukrun nafs, regardless of its entity and cause ... (١)

Abd al-Razzaq Qashani in his Qur'an commentary presents the following explanation` for the verse under discussion:

)لاـ تقربو الصلاه) ای لاـ تقربو مقام الحضور والمناجاه مع الله فی حال کونکم (سکارئ) من نوم الغفله او من خمورر الهوئ ومحبه الدنیا (حتئ تعلموا ما تقولون) فی مناجاتکم ولا تشتغل قلوبکم باشغال الدنیا وساوسها...

Do not)

١- Mulla Sultan 'Ali, Bayan al-Sa'adah, v.٢, pp. ٢١-٢٢.

near prayers): Do not near the station of presence and secret conversation with Allah when you are (intoxicated) by the sleep of negligence or the intoxicants of mundane desire and love of the world, (until you know what you are saying) in your whisperings and do not occupy your hearts with the occupations of the world and its insinuations (....(۱)

sukr) we come to realize that the commonly) سکر Having known the roots of understood intoxication is just one of its examples which the masses seem to be most familiar with. Other extensions (masadiq) can also be comprehended. Commentators of the Holy Qur'an mention a tradition of Imam al-Sadiq (`a) that implicitly endorses .this contention

sukr of sleep'.' سكر النوم He (a) says about verse (۴:۴۳) that, of the examples of sukr is the "This statement," says the Mawla Kashani in his 'al-Safi', "manifests universality." (۲) He means that 'sukr' (that interruption that comes about in the natural process of thinking and intellection) has various extensions. In a tradition from Al-Kafi, Imam al-:Baqir (`a) is reported to have said

لا- تقم الئ الصلاه متكاسلا ولا- متناعسا ولا- متثاقلا- فانها من خلال النفاق وقد نهى الله عزوجل ان تقوموا الى الصلاه وانتم سكارئ, قال سكر النوم

Neither stand for prayer in the state of restlessness, or slumber; nor while you are over satiated; for verily (all) those are of the characteristics of hypocrisy; and indeed Allah has forbidden you to stand in prayer while you are intoxicated; and by intoxication He means 'the

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Ibn `Arabi, Tafsir Ibn 'Arabi, vol. ۱, p. ۱۴۳ -۱

Mawla Muhsin Fayd al Kashani, Tafsir al-Safi, v. ۱, p.۴۵۳ -۲

'intoxication of sleep

Furthermore, the reason for the prohibition of prayer in the state of intoxication, as indicated in the verse under discussion, clearly reveals the necessity of attention of .what one expresses in prayer

Other verses of the Holy Qur'an also reveal, although implicitly, the necessity of attention in prayer. For example, verse ۱۴ of chapter Taha clearly tells us that prayer :is a means of remembering Allah

اقم الصلاه لذکری

Keep up prayer

(For remembering Me.(۱

Can remembrance ever be possible when there is no attention and concentration in .prayer? Obviously not

Evidence From The Traditions

:The following traditions too prove the necessity of the presence of heart in prayer

۱. The Ahlul Bayt (a) are reported to have said:

لیس لک من صلاتک الا ما احضرت فیه قلبک

You have no share from your prayer

(Save that portion in which you maintained the attention of your heart.(۲

۲. The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said:

لا یتقبل الله صلاه عبد لا یحضر قلبه مع بدنه

Allah does not accept the prayer of that servant of his

(Whose heart is not present along with his body. (۳

:Imam al-Baqir (`a) is reported to have said .۳

اذا قمت فی الصلاه فعلیک باالاقبال علی صلاتک فانما یحسب لک منها ما اقبلت علیه

,When you stand up in prayer

,You should pay attention towards it

For verily only that portion of it shall be taken into account

(In which you paid attention.(۴

What The Muslim Jurists Hold

According to Muslim jurists (fuq'aha), however, the presence of heart is not obligatory in prayer. For not all men can achieve and maintain attention throughout their prayer. It would also require time

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Holy Qur'an, ۲۰:۱۴ -۱
Ibn Fahd Hilli, Uddat al-Da'i, p. ۱۶۸ -۲
.Abu Ja’far al-Barqi, al Mahasin, v.۱, p. ۴۰۶ -۳
Thiqat al-Islam al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, v.۳, p.۲۹۹ -۴

.before one has complete control over his imaginations in prayer

Hence, according to the Islamic jurisprudence the state of continual concentration is not a condition the absence of which invalidates prayer. Nevertheless it is considered as highly recommended, such that some jurists allow the prayer to be delayed within the framework of the prayer time for the sake of achieving the state of the heart's .(attention (iqbal

Therefore although the prayer of one who does not observe attention is correct and sufficient in absolving him from his obligation, it would not transport him spiritually. The overt actions of prayer would only relieve him from disobedience. For him, however, to soar to the Divine and undergo a transformation would require attention .and concentration

Part ۲: The Possibility of Attention in Prayer

point

This (trend) made many scholars conjecture that maintaining the bird of imagination... and rendering it obedient are among those matters that are beyond the realm of possibility and adjacent to natural impossibilities. However, this is not the case, for it is possible to make it obedient by means of spiritual mortification and training and spending time, to the extent that the bird of imagination is in his hold and does not ...move except by his will and choice

Imam Ruhullah Khumayni-

The Possibility of Concentration In Prayer

:Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

(Allah does not charge a soul Save to its capacity.(۱

The stereotype that concentration in prayer is impossible is one of the greatest

hurdles that hamper man from wayfaring towards the Divine proximity and attaining his perfection. It is

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Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۸۶ -۱

indeed, according to some, a Satanic ruse inculcated to hinder man from attaining his .felicity and happiness in both the worlds

The human being, therefore, should be extremely cautious before accepting any unestablished notion without convincing proof and evidence. He should never be deceived with statistical data and inductive reasoning to conclude that huduru'l qalb .(the presence of heart) is impossible or next to impossible

Akin to physical training that requires continuous exercise and practice, mind control too can be achieved with time and struggle. Man should realize that his faculty of imagination is habituated to flit to different places all the time. Therefore he should .strive to curb this habit and bridle it so that it is directed by his will

:The late Imam Khumayni says

ومن القوى التى تقبل التربيه قوه الخيال وقوه الواهمه فانهما قبل التربيه كطائر فرار ومتحرك بلا نهايه يطير من غصن ويتحرك من شيئ الى شيء اخر بحيث ان الانسان اذا حاسبها دقيقه واحده يرى انها انتقلت مسلسله الى اشياء بمناسبات ضعيفه جدا و ارتباتاط غير متناسبه حتى ظن كثير من العلماء ان حفظ طائر الخيال وجعله طاءعا

من الامور الخارجه عن حيز الامكان وملحق با لمحالات العاديه, ولكن الامر ليس كذلك ويمكن تطويعه بالرياضه والتربيه وصرف الوقت بحيث يكون طائر الخيال فى قبضته لا يتحرك الا بارادته واختياره فيحبسه متى اراد فى اى مقصد او اى مطلب بحيث يكون محبوسا فى ذلك المقصد ساعات

.

And of the faculties that accept orientation and training are the faculties of imagination (khayal) and estimate (wahm), for surely, before orientation, they

resemble a bird that frequently escapes and perpetually moves; it flies from one branch to another and moves from one thing to another, such that, if the human being was to evaluate the movements it has made in one minute's time, he would find that it has moved continuously to (different) things on extremely trivial instances and .irrelevant occasions

This (trend) made many scholars conjecture that maintaining the bird of imagination and rendering it obedient are among those matters that are beyond the realm of .possibility and adjacent to natural impossibilities

However, this is not the case, for it is possible to make it obedient by means of spiritual mortification and training and spending time, to the extent that the bird of imagination is in his hold and does not move except by his will and choice, and (thus) he suppresses it whenever he wants to, wherever he wishes to, and in whatever instance he chooses to do so- such that it is held in the location (said instance) for (hours. (۱)

Therefore judging the statistical data acquired from a group of the masses should not quickly lead one to make conclusions of its impossibility. Only unwavering evidence should be sought to find out the truth. Such evidence may be gotten from the Holy .Qur'an, the Sunna, or impartial rational judgments

Evidence From the Qur'an And the Holy Narrations

The verse that calls the believer to keep up prayer for the purpose of Allah's remembrance (۲۰:۱۴) (۲) as well as the traditions mentioned in the previous section also clearly prove

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۱- Imam Ruhullah al-Khumayni, al-Adab al Ma'nawiyyah Lissalat, pp. ۹۵-۹۶

۲- '.Keep up prayer for remembering Me'

the possibility of concentration in prayer: how can the Wise Creator command man to ?keep up prayer to remember Him when the latter cannot concentrate therein

The traditions also informed us that the degree of acceptance of the daily prayer .depended on the extent of one's attention therein

Can such directions of guidance be taught to the believer if they are impossible to achieve? Obviously Allah does not burden any soul save what it can bear to handle. :The Holy Qur'an says

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

(Allah does not charge a soul save to its capacity.(١

Hence one cannot deny the possibility of attaining concentration in prayer. The task being difficult cannot be taken as a reason of its impossibility. If man struggles and is :orderly in his venture, he would achieve his objective. The Holy Qur'an says

وَأَن لَّيسَ لِلإِنسَانِ إِلاَّ مَا سَعَى

(And that a man shall have to his account only as he has labored.(٢

:In short

Allah does not enjoin that which the human being cannot bear .١

Allah has enjoined us to pray for His Remembrance .٢

.Therefore, His Remembrance is a possible phenomenon

And Remembrance without attention is no Remembrance .٣

.Therefore attention in prayer is a possible phenomenon

Part ٣: Levels of Attention in Prayer

point

the level of the heart's conviction is extremely different from intellectual... comprehension. There are many things man has grasped intellectually, but has not ...attained the heart's conviction, and his heart does not confirm what his intellect says

Imam Ruhullah Khumayni -

:The Holy Qur'an says

وَأَن لَّيسَ لِلإنسَانِ إلاَّ مَا سَعَى

And that a man shall have to his

۱- Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۸۶

۲- Ibid., ۵۳:۳۹

(account only as he has labored.(١

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا

All have degrees

(According to what they have done. (٢

In order to determine the steps one must pursue to achieve attention in prayer, we must try to define the kind of attention we aspire. According to scholars of ethics and gnosis attention is of different levels and degrees. Clearly, not all who aspire to realize attention in prayer immediately possess the ability to ascend to the most .recommended of all the levels of attention

To define all the levels of attention is beyond the scope of this limited treatise. We shall only briefly look at some of the recommended levels of attention in prayer, so that we may know where we stand and what our target should be. Discussing the higher levels would require an introduction, which is beyond the scope of this treatise. Those interested, however, in having information beyond what is covered over here, .may refer to the advanced texts available on this subject

:Attention in prayer is sometimes divided into two kinds

.Attention to the act of worship .١

.Attention to the Worshipped One .٢

Attention to the act of worship' in turn is of various levels, some of which can be' attained with practice by a majority of people, whereas others can only be realized by those who have thoroughly purified themselves from the taints of sins and attained .the proximity of Almighty Allah

Attention to the Creator', however, can be experienced by only those who enjoy the' higher levels of the previous kind of

۱- Ibid

۲- Ibid., ۶:۱۳۲

attention. This should, however, not make us believe that we cannot attain such levels. Rather, they are attainable, but need continual spiritual struggle and steadfastness.

The late Imam al-Khumayni in his Sirr al-Salat (the Kernel of Prayer) enumerates the levels of 'attention to the act of worship' as follows: (1)

- Attention to Worship in General: In this rudimentary level, which is attainable for all (the believers), the worshipper must inculcate in his heart that worship is the act of praising the Creator. And from the beginning of the act of worship up to its end he should make the heart understand that he is extolling the Creator, even though he does not understand the meaning of what he expresses.

- Attention to Worship in Detail: In this level the worshipper's heart is present at every moment of the worship he is engaged in. Besides, he also knows how he praises and whispers to his Lord. This level itself is subdivided into several different levels depending on the stations of the hearts of the worshippers and their gnosis.

Levels of Detailed Attention

- Level 1: A group of people do not comprehend save the outer and overt facet of prayer. However, they do understand the general import of the recitations, laudations, and invocations they pronounce in prayer. The presence of their heart, however, is limited to inculcating the meaning of whatever they recite in prayer. It is highly important for this group not to limit the meaning of what they recite in what they understand there-from; (in other

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1- Imam al-Khumayni, Sirr al-Salat, pp. 17-20

words,) they should not think that there isn't any (other) meaning of what they recite save that which they apparently comprehend. "For," says Imam al-Khumayni, "this belief besides being contrary to the intellect and tradition, is very detrimental to the human being too." And one of the great masterpiece ruses of Satan is to occupy and please man with what he (already) possesses, and make him cynical towards the rest .of the unknown realities and sciences, thereby deriving astonishing results

- Level ٢: Another group consists of those who intellectually understand the realities of the acts of prayer. For example they understand by intellectual proof how all praises (solely) return to God; or they know the reality of Sirat al Mustaqim and the meaning of Surat al-Tawhid that represents the fundamental facets of the ideological realities. All this is known, however, through rational proofs and the intellect. The huduru 'l qalb of this group in prayer is such that their hearts are attentive and comprehend in detail the realities and the laudations they recite, and understand .what they express and how they praise their Lord

- Level ٣: Another group, after having comprehended the realities of the acts of worship through their intellect, inculcate the same into their hearts, and attain belief and conviction in the same. This is because the level of the heart's conviction is extremely different from intellectual comprehension. There are many things that man may have grasped intellectually, but not yet have attained the heart's conviction; hence, his

.heart does not confirm what his intellect says

Having briefly observed the levels of the presence of heart in prayer, we may now look at how one can achieve some of these levels. But first, in order to treat the continual process of flitting that our minds always experience during prayer, it would be better to diagnose and search for the root cause of the malady, so that we are able .to decipher its remedy and the correct method of its treatment

Part ۴: Hurdles on the Way To Attention in Prayer And their Removal

point

The to-and-fro movement that we undertake to drive off the distractions of our minds all our life will never make us progress. It rather manifests stagnation and stillness. On the contrary, if we were to uproot the causes of distraction, we would .easily be able to soar towards the proximity of Allah

Causes of Distraction

point

Scholars of ethics and gnosis mention in their books two fundamental categories of :elements that can distract one's attention in prayer

The External Elements -

The Internal Elements -

The External Elements

These are external elements that divert the attention of the worshipper- (musalli). They mainly concern his sight and hearing perceptions. Places where a conversation is going on, or the television happens to be switched on, for example, would quickly .distract the attention of one who is easily vulnerable to such stimuli

Praying on a beautifully decorated velvet prayer mat or an open place where people tend to pass by can also serve as a source of diversion of attention for some. For this

very reason some scholars of ethics advise people

p: ١٩

whose attention is easily diverted by auditories and visibilities to seek seclusion in a dark place when praying.

In his commentary to al-Kafi, Sadru'l Muta'allihin informs us of what the wayfarers to Allah's proximity practiced after having sought forgiveness from Allah. One of these, he says, is al-khalwa (seclusion), which of course does not imply, as some may tend to surmise, the total abandonment of the society for the sake of worship. He says:

وفائدتها دفع الشواغل وضبط السمع والبصر, فانهما دهليزا القلب يدخل منهما اليه من الشواغل و المفاسد والوساوس ما يزعجه ويغيره عما هو عليه من قصده, فلا بد من ضبطها, وليس يمكن ذلک الا بالخلوه فی مکان مظلم...

The benefit of seclusion is that it frees oneself from preoccupations and enables one to control his hearing and sight. For verily these two are the vestibules of the heart; it is through them that things like distractions, evil thoughts and Satanic insinuations that disturb the human being and divert him from his intention, enter the heart. Hence they must be bridled; and that cannot be realized save by means of seclusion in a dark place...(1)

Seclusion is recommended in supererogatory prayers. Otherwise, congregational prayer has ample benefits and one should strive to always attend the congregation so that he may be spiritually uplifted.

The Internal Elements

The internal elements act as the closest and most dangerous of the above two categories to the musalli. Resembling a magnetic force, they attract innumerable kinds of imaginations related to them. So long as they subsist, man should never

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۱- Sadru'l Muta'allihin al-Shirazi, Sharhu Usul al-Kafi, v.l, p. ۴۴۹.

dream of attaining even some of the rudimentary kinds of concentration in prayer, let .alone attaining the higher levels

It is useless to suppose that continual forceful repulsion of stray thoughts can easily enable one to achieve the state of concentration he aspires. In his expurgation (tahdhib) of the voluminous ethical work of Ihya, Mawla Fayd Kashani quotes a beautiful example Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali mentions to illustrate the reality of the :matter. He says

ومثاله: رجل تحت شجره اراد ان يصفو له فكره وكانت اصوات العصافير تشوش عليه, فلم يزل يطيرها بخشبه في يده ويعود الى فكره فتعود الى التتفير بالخشبه, فقيل له ان هذا سير السوانى ولا ينقطع فان اردت الخلاص فاقطع الشجره, فكذلك شجره الشهوات اذا تشعبت و تفرعت اغصانها انجذبت اليها الافكار الجذاب العصافير الى الاشجار الذباب الى الاقذار و الشغل يطول فى دفعها فان الذباب كلما ذب اب ولاجله سمى ذبابا. فكذللك الخواطر وهذه الشهوات كثيره وقلما بخلو العبد عنها. ويجمعها اصل واحد وهو حب الدنيا وذلك راس كل خطيئه

...

Its example is that of a man under a tree who wanted his thoughts to be clear (from distractions), while the noise of the sparrows on the tree (above) disturbed him. Whenever he chased them off by a stick in his hand to resume his state of contemplation, he found them return again. The following, thus, was said to him: 'Surely this kind of movement is like that of sawani (the camel that is used to draw water from the well and carry the same (سير السوائى); and

(such circular movement) shall not change. (1)

Therefore if you would like to free yourself (from this state of continual distraction) chop off the tree altogether. Likewise is the tree of material desires: when its branches multiply it attracts various thoughts the way the sparrows were attracted to the branches of the tree and the way a fly is attracted to dirt; it would take a long time to chase it off, for indeed whenever the fly is chased away it returns back (kullama dhabba aba).

That is why it was called dhubab (that which returns whenever it is chased). Similar is the case with imagination. And these material passions are numerous and hardly does the supplicant lack in having them. And one origin unites them: love for the world, (which is the root cause of every misdeed'. (2)

Hence the solution to eliminate the magnetic force within, is to demagnetize it through the process of continual struggle against one's vain inclinations and the process of detachment (zuhd) from the pleasures of the material world.

This should not be mistaken for 'abstinence', since Islam does not teach us to abandon the 'material means' that Almighty Allah has provided us with. The real meaning of zuhd is 'detachment' (qat'ul `al'aiq) and not 'abandonment of the material means' as conjectured by some.

Only when the human being understands that the material needs of the world are 'the means' and not 'the goal', and practices accordingly can the process of demagnetization transpire.

Part 5: Suggested Methods of Achieving Attention In Prayer

point

(Imam 'Ali ('a)

p: 22

1- Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali here likens the situation with the 'sayr al-sawani' the

movement of the camel that is normally used to draw water from the well. The circular movement it undertakes is an allusion to 'stagnation' and 'no progress'. The to-and-fro movement that we undertake to drive off the distractions of our minds all our life will never make us progress. It rather manifests stagnation and stillness. On the contrary, if we were to uproot the causes of distraction, we would easily be able to soar towards the proximity of Allah.

Mawla Fayd Kashani , al-Mahajjatu'l Bayda', v.I, p.۳۷۶ -۲

is reported to have said: "Beware that every deed of yours is performed according to your prayer." This means that there is a real link between our prayers and the deeds we perform.

This tradition informs us that the deeds of the human being are shaped according to his prayer. If the prayer infuses the spirit of monotheism in the heart and mind of the worshipper (musalli) and orients him accordingly, the deeds that would follow would sparkle with the light of monotheism and the human being would undergo spiritual progress.

Realization of The Importance of Prayers

Praying in the state of indifference and laxity should not be considered as an astonishing phenomenon in the life of one who has not realized the importance of prayer and its vital role in a believer's life. This contention needs no intellectual evidence, as it is crystal clear to every impartial observer.

The emphasis Islam lays on prayer is enough to drive one to appreciate its fundamental role in a person's life and character. Imam 'Ali (`a) is reported to have said:

واعلم ان کل شیء من عملک تبع لصلاتک

"Beware that every deed of yours is performed According to your prayer."(۱)

This means that there is a real link between our prayers and the deeds we perform. This tradition informs us that the deeds of the human being are shaped according to his prayer. If the prayer infuses the spirit of monotheism in the heart and mind of the worshipper (musalli) and orients him accordingly, the deeds that would follow would sparkle with

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۱- Imam 'Ali (`a), Nahju'l Balagha, letter no. ۲۷

.the light of monotheism and the human being would undergo spiritual progress

However, if it lays a negative effect, the actions that would follow would assume the color of polytheism and remoteness from Divine proximity. Consequently our good deeds would carry no weight at all. Almighty Allah informs us about a people who conjecture that they have done good and are on the straight path, but in reality they :have nothing but loss

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا

Say (O Our Apostle Muhammad) Shall we tell you who will be the greatest losers in their works? Those whose striving goes astray in the present life, while they think that (they are working good deeds. (۱)

One who always verbally declares that all praises belong to Allah (al-Hamdu lilLah), whether in his qira'a or elsewhere in prayer, but is oblivious of the true meaning of what he utters may, for example, give away a lot of wealth as alms (sadaqa), but always experience a sense of self-esteem (`ujb), thinking that he has done a favor on .Allah

This is while the core of praise restricts it for the real doer of good or possessor of an attribute of perfection, which in the language of Qur'an is none other than Allah. The :Holy Qur'an says

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

(All praises belong to Allah. (۲)

Whenever anyone does any good 'the doer and the deed' both are the creation of Allah, since their existence as well as subsistence

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Holy Qur'an, ۱۸:۱۰۳-۱۰۴ -۱

Ibid, ١:٢ -٢

entirely depends on His power. And since He is the sole Creator and whatever He :creates is beautiful, every beautiful deed is His

الذی أحسن کلِّ شئ خلقه

(One who made beautiful all that He created' (١'

Furthermore, since He is the sole possessor of all perfect and beautiful attributes, all :praises belong to Him

اللَّهُ لا إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ لَهُ الأَسْمَاء الْحُسْنَى

;Allah, excepting Him, there is no God

(His are the beautiful Names. (٢

Therefore how can one ever think highly of himself for having given something that he really and ontologically does not possess? How can one ever extol himself for a ?good deed that the Almighty enabled him to perform

One, however, who understands and always pays attention to the fact that all praises solely belong to Allah and appreciates its true meaning would always thank Allah for .the blessing of enabling him to give his wealth for His sake

To express takbir in prayers and be ignorant of its meaning or inattentive of the same, would not make one God-wary in many of his acts. Allahu Akbar means that Allah is greater than whatever is described of Him. In simpler words, He transcends the bounds of finitude and is free from every kind of shortcoming or imperfection. He is :Infinite and present everywhere

فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ

(Whithersoever you turn, there is the face of Allah ...' (٣ ... '

One, therefore, who does not inculcate this truth in his mind and heart in prayer would always blemish his soul with the taints of

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۱- Ibid, ۳۲:۷

۲- Ibid, ۲۰:۸

۳- Ibid, ۲:۱۱۵

sin'. Sin, which is disobedience to the Creator, is a practical expression of polytheism,' whereas the worshipper declares the Non-composite and Infinite reality of His .Creator which is equal to the impossibility of even the assumption of a second

In simpler terms: The Holy Quran informs us of a people who worship their vain :desires and consider them as their God

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ

(Have you seen him who has taken his vain desire to be his God? (١)

Therefore "obeying" one's vain desires is to worship them, which is tantamount to polytheism. In other words whosoever prefers his vain desires to some of the .commands of Allah is practically declaring polytheism

If the musulli were to understand the above, and realized the meaning of takbir, and mold the heart accordingly, he would always be deterred from sin. Small wonder it is :that the Holy Qur'an says

وَأَقِمْ الصَّلاةَ إِنَّ الصّلاةَ تَنْهَى عَنْ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ

;And keep up prayer...

Surely prayer restrains one from

(indecency and the forbidden... (٢

Finding Unoccupied Time And Unoccupied Heart

A very important method of attaining huduru'l qalb suggested by some scholars of ethics is to apportion a specific time for prayer, a time in which you have no preoccupations to busy your mind and heart with. Habituating oneself in praying with a free mind would really help the novice in the path of Allah to attain concentration and maintain the same throughout his worship. It is only by means of proper discipline .and organization that such a practice can be achieved

It is impossible for the contemplative who has

۱- Ibid, ۲۵:۴۳

۲- Ibid, ۲۹:۴۳

realized the close link between his prayer and his deeds to be slothful and give less .importance to prayer

Part ۶: The Effect of Maintaining Attention in Prayer

If his disposition has not been eclipsed by his misdeeds, the desire to attain perfection never ceases, and the wayfarer continues on his journey towards his Beloved. Almighty Allah molded the human being in a manner that he yearns and is able to soar ...forever and achieve the higher levels of perfection

His aim is the Infinite. Examples of such a drive are manifested in the human being's craving for infinite knowledge, power, and beauty... The beauty here lies in how the Creator designed the human being: although man has nothing of his own, not even existence to own his finite perfection, the Infinitely Perfect continually welcomes him "to Himself: "To Allah is the homecoming

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّکَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّکَ كَدْحاً فَمُلَاقِيهِ

!O Man

You are striving

Unto your Lord

,Laboriously

(And you shall encounter Him.(۱

:The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said

ان الصلاه قربان المؤمن

Verily prayer is

A means for the believer to attain God's proximity.(۲)۳۸

One of the most sublime effects of observing attention in prayer, as indicated in the

above narration, is Allah's nearness and proximity. The abovementioned verse of the Holy Qur'an also tells us that man is a traveler in thus world and that his destination is the neighborhood of his Beloved Creator. Again, in chapter ۳۵, verse no. ۱۸, we read:

وَمَن تَزَكَّى فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّى لِنَفْسِهِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

And whosoever purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own soul's good.

p: ۲۷

۱- Holy Qur'an, ۸۴:۶

۲- al-Hindi, Kanzu'l Ummal, tr. ۱۸۹۰۷

(To Allah is the homecoming (destination) (1)

Almighty Allah prescribed a set of devotional acts for man to enable him to soar to His Proximity and attain knowledge of His Exalted Presence. It is this sacred aspiration wherein lies the true happiness of the human being. To understand this reality does not require one to search for intellectual proofs.

The innate nature (fitra) of the human being itself is a proof of this reality: the human being innately aspires to attain infinite perfection, which exists in none other than his Creator. If his innate nature has not been eclipsed by his misdeeds, the desire to attain perfection never ceases, and the wayfarer continues on his journey towards his Beloved.

Almighty Allah molded the human being in a manner that he yearns and is able to soar forever and achieve the higher levels of perfection. He naturally does not aspire for limited perfection. His aim is the Infinite. Manifestations of such a drive are the human being's craving for infinite knowledge, power, and beauty.

Independent Infinite perfection, however, solely belongs to God, since He alone is the Necessary Existent.

His near servants, however can enjoy His proximity and perpetually soar and progress, since the journey is endless. The beauty here lies in how the Creator designed the human being: although man has nothing of his own, not even existence to own his finite perfection, the Infinitely Perfect continually welcomes him to Himself:

والله يدعو إلى دار السلام ويهدى من يشاء إلى صراط مستقيم

Allah

۱- Masir' in the verse has a meaning worthy of consideration. Its verbal noun' (masdar) is 'sayrurah' (the process of becoming). Raghib, the well-known lexicographer, in his Mufradat says: 'Sara is to transfer from one state to another.' (al-

Mufradat, p. ١۴٩). The human being by means of devotional practices undergoes a perpetual process of change of state, which according to the Holy Qur'an is endless, since the path to Allah, Whose reality is Absolute and Infinite Perfection is endless. We say this because whatever distance the human being would be enabled to cover, he would never attain Absolute Perfection something that is perceivable only for the Necessary Being. Even if he were to attain unimaginably exalted heights through .devotional practices his perfection would still be limited

continually Invites

To the abode of peace

And continually Guides whosoever

He wants

(To the straight path (1)

إِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

(To Allah is the homecoming.(2)

The process of getting closer to God should not mislead us to believe that God is at a higher physical plane and we would reach him if we observe attention in our prayers. Rather, the distance is not physical but metaphysical and spiritual.

The human being through a continual process of inculcation of truth in his prayer, undergoes a spiritual transformation: the prayer teaches and orients him. It ignites his heart to repent and wake up. It forces him to seek forgiveness of the sins that he has committed; it teaches him to be an obedient servant of God; it perpetually transforms him and transports him towards true monotheism.

Therefore if concentration is always maintained therein, the true aspirant of perfection can purify his inner self and obey all whatever Allah has commanded him. It is the sense of indifference in man that creates doubt in the possibility of attaining the higher levels of human perfection that the gnostics (awliya') speak about. If one were to painstakingly contemplate and understand even the overt and outer meaning of what he expresses in prayer, he can surely undergo spiritual change.

How can the musalli always have the audacity to declare the immaculate nature of God, when he manifests in his practical life actions that are incongruous with his declaration? To rely on people's wealth, for example, is an extension (misdaq) of such incongruity: how can

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ۱۰:۲۵

۲- Holy Qur'an, ۳۵:۱۸

one pin his hopes on a human being like himself who (in reality) neither possesses ?anything of his own, nor has knowledge of his next moment

How can one show respect to another due to the wealth and affluence of the latter, while he always declares that all praises belong to God, which finally means that every entity is His property? If one were to carefully ponder over what he expresses in prayer and understand the essence of their meaning, his actions would shine with the spirit of monotheism and transport him to the hometown which his heart naturally .aspires

Part ۷: The Meaning of Prayer

point

In Islamic traditions we understand the real meaning of 'takbir' as 'Allahu Akbar min... an yusaf' (God is greater than what is described of Him) ...His ownership is real and ontological (haqiqi and takwini): He has total control over all His creation, and can lay .any kind of effect on any one of them

Therefore, every sort of knowledge, wisdom, wealth and treasure is His, and totally under His control... we should engrave in our minds the fact that we are placing the .(most honored part of our body (our face) on the most insignificant of things (earth

The scope of this short appendix is too limited, and hence we shall only explain some :parts of prayer here below

(Niyya (Intention

It is not necessary for one to pronounce the niyya verbally, for the its reality is "the intention of doing an action". The musalli (the one who prays) has it in his

mind and knows what prayer he is going to recite. The fuqaha in their books of jurisprudence mention the necessity of the intention of qurb (attaining nearness of Allah). They say that we must pray with the intention of attaining nearness of Allah.

The worshipper is advised to be extremely watchful lest his intention mixes with any of his worldly interests, for that will destroy the edifice of his prayer. Ethicians or the `ulama-u١-akhlaq have underscored with convincing proofs the fundamental importance of niyya or intention.

Another very important necessity is to maintain one's niyya till the end of his Salat; for at times, the musalli may begin with a purely Divine intention, but when he senses an onlooker around him, he changes his attitude due to the latter's presence.

Takbiratul Ihram

الله أكبر

Allah is Greater

This is when the musalli pronounces the words 'Allahu Akbar' translated as `God is the Greatest' or `God is greater (than every other being)'. When uttering these words he must inculcate in himself the fact that no being in the world of creation is greater than Allah.

He should visualize the reality that every element of his body and soul is totally dependent upon Allah's Will. Hence he has no reason to think for himself as possessing any degree of greatness whatsoever. Instead he should express his lowliness in front of his Great Lord in a way that he tangibly senses his total dependence to Him.

In Islamic traditions we understand the real meaning of 'takbir' as 'Allahu Akbar min an yusaf' (God is

.(greater than what is described of Him

(Qiyam (Standing Upright with no movements

The Islamic jurists are of the opinion that whoever is indifferent of this pillar of Salat, his Salat becomes null and void (batil). The secret of qiyam is very interesting: the Ahlul Ma'rifa (the learned scholars) know qiyam as referring to al-tawhidul af'ali (unity of actions). This means that every action that any being performs entirely stands by the Power of Allah. (This however should not be taken to mean that God does the action for man and man has no role in his action; man has been given a will and can choose the path that he desires.) Therefore, as we stand in qiyam, we must place this .exalted meaning in our hearts too

(Qira'a (Qur'an–Recitation

point

The musalli then recites Suratu'l Hamd and another chapter from the Holy Qur'an. Before reciting it, however, he should, in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an, seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan. Then he must recite distinctly (tartil) the Fatihatul Kitab and inculcate in his mind the meaning of every sentence that he :recites. Following is a simple translation of Suratul Fatiha

Suratu' l Fatihah

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

I begin with Allah's Name, the All-merciful (al-Rahman), Whose Grace and Mercy .١ cover every created being, the Ever-Merciful (al-Rahim), whose specific Mercy is .enjoyed by the believers

الْحَمْدُ لِلّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Alhamdu lillahi Rabbil alamin

All praises belong only to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (The Name Allah is a proper .۲ noun that refers to the Exalted Being and is believed

to manifest all His Perfect qualities and attributes. And the word 'rabb' which we translated as 'Lord' has a much comprehensive meaning. It means `the Absolute Owner, Provider, Sustainer and Trainer'. This means God provided, and continues providing existence to us; He owns every element of our being; He provides us, out of His Mercy any perfection that He wants, and guides us at every step on our way to His (.nearness

الرَّحْمـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Al Rahmanir Rahim

The All-merciful (al-Rahman), Whose Grace and Mercy covers every created being, .٣
.the Ever-Merciful (al-Rahim), whose specific Mercy is enjoyed by the believers

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Maliki yawmiddin

Owner of the Day of Judgment (and every existing being). (We must understand the .۴
fact that Allah's ownership is not relative or superficial, as is man's. His ownership is real and ontological (haqiqi and takwini): He has total control over all His creation, and can lay any kind of effect on any one of them. Therefore, every sort of knowledge, (.wisdom, wealth, treasure is His, and totally under His control

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'in

.You alone we worship, and from You alone we seek help .۵

اهدِنَــــــا الصِّرَاطَ المُستَقِيمَ

Ihdinas siratal mustaqim

.O Allah) Guide us on the straight path) .۶

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمتَ عَلَيهِمْ غَيرِ المَغضُوبِ عَلَيهِمْ وَلاَ الضَّالِّينَ

Siratal ladhina an'amta `alayhim ghayril maghdubi `alayhim walad dallin

.۷ The path of those on whom You have blessed; not of those who have earned Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray.

Having recited Suratu'۱ Hamd the musalli is allowed to recite

p: ۳۳

any other Sura of the Holy Qur'an apart from those that contain verses, that if read or .heard, oblige him to prostrate (or do sajda) according to the Islamic law

Since many of us recite Surat al-Tawhid as our second Sara, I shall give a simple .meaning of the same in the following pages

Surat at-Tawhid

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillahir Bahmanir Rahim

I begin with Allah's Name, the All-merciful (al-Rahman), Whose Mercy covers every .١ dependent being, the Ever-Merciful (al-Rahim), whose specific Mercy is enjoyed by .the believers

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَد

Qul Huwallahu Ahad

Say (O Muhammad) He Allah is One (meaning Non-composite He cannot be divided .٢ (like the divisible one. He possesses Infinite existence

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

Allahus Samad

(Allah, the Everlasting Refuge (١ .٣

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

Lam yalid wa lam yulad

He begets not (i.e. nothing has been separated from his Exalted Nature), nor is he .۴ (begotten (i.e. he did not separate or come out from another being

وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ

Wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan Ahad

And there is none like Him (because every other being has been created, and is .۵ .(dependent, save Him the Independent

(Ruku' (Bending In Utter Humility

Then the musalli bends in humbleness to his Lord, and expresses Allah's Immaculate :Nature, as follows

سبحان ربی العظیم وبحمده

Subhana Rabbiyal `aDhimi wa bihamdih

,Free from all imperfections is my Exalted Lord

.And I praise Him

(Sujud (Prostration

Sujud is known to be the Highest Degree of submission (istikana) to God. Therefore, as we recite the dhikr of sujud, we should inculcate in our minds the fact that we are placing the most honored part of our body

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This is Arthur J. Arberry's translation which is known in some circles to be one of the -۱ best available today. Nevertheless, it would not be unbeneficial to understand the word "as-Samad" better. Its means 'الـذی یقصـد الیـه فی الحوائـج the One Intended to accomplish one's needs.' This meaning is also narrated from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (`a) as quoted in the sacred text of al-Kafi. `Allamah Tabataba'i in his al-Mizan believes that the other variant meanings given for "al-Samad" in some holy narratives of the Imams (`a) are the said meaning's inseparable attributes (lawazim) - see al-Mizan, v.۲۰, p.۳۹۱. There is another translation from `Izzuddin al-Hayek which reads: 'Allah is the Eternally Besought of all.' vide p.۹۵۴, An approximate Translation of .the meanings of the Honorable Qur'an in the English Language, Dar al-Fikr, Lebanon

.(our face) on the most insignificant of things (earth)

:The dhikr of sujud is as follows

سبحان ربی الأعلی وبحمده

Subhana Rabbiyal a`alaa wa bihamdih

,Free from defects is my Lord, the Most High

.And I praise Him

Part ۸: Heavenly Stars Memoirs and Anecdotes of the God-Wary

point

How much time is left for midday?,' because he had no watch with him, and had no'... strength to look at the watch; after every ۱۵ minutes he would ask us (the time), not because his prayer should not be prayed outside its time, but because of performing ... prayer at the beginning of its time

Once again, he said with disappointment: 'Why do you deal with me in such a way. ... '.Take back the food, so that I perform my prayer

. I only have hope of God's Grace and have no (action) at my credit to be hopeful ...

so that his eyes does not even fall once at a ghayr mahram woman. I observed this ... ...from him as an established habit

Spiritual Ablutions (۱

point

:Allah (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

Surely Allah Loves those who turn unto Him constantly and Loves those who (continually purify themselves. (۱

:The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said

ان استطعت ان تكون ابدا علیٰ وضوء فافعل: فان ملک الموت اذا قبض روح العبد وهو علیٰ وضوء کتب له شهاده

If you can always be in the state of wudu', than do so; for verily if the Angel of death ,were to take the soul of a servant of God while the latter is in the state of wudu

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۲۲

(martyrdom is written for him.(1)

:Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (`a) is reported to have said

الوضوء علئ الوضوء نور على نور

(Wudu upon wudu is light upon light. (2)

'A) Imam Khumayni Regularly Renews his Wudu

In one of her memoirs, Ms. Dabbagh says:) "...One of these points was the orderliness) and discipline of the personal life of that great man (i.e. Imam Khumayni): discipline in reading the papers, discipline in (his) meetings, discipline in reading letters, and discipline (even) in renewing his wudu'. Definitely it was not such that you suddenly .'ask for him, and are told that he has gone to renew his wudu

He rather had a specific time for that. I remember one day in the building that was opposite the house of the Imam in Paris, I together with other brothers was busy .listening to an audio cassette

Suddenly I remembered that I must leave, for it was the time of the renewal of Imam's wudu'. I thought that I must inspect the basin so that it is clean and orderly. I did not like the house for which I was responsible, to look disorderly. The brothers said, 'Come on, does it mean that he has a specific time for that?' However, I went (and cleaned, and incidentally, the Imam came at that very moment.(3)

Ms. Marziye Hadidechee

Famously known as Dabbagh: a member of the team sent to Moscow for conveying .the late Imam Khumayni's message to Gorbachev

'B) Imam Khumayni closes the water tap between the acts of wudu

On several occasions I have seen Imam Khumayni performing wudu', and noticed" that he closes the water tap between the acts

Muhammad al-Ray Shahri, Mizan al-Hikma, New ed., vol. ۴, pg. ۳۵۶۳, tr. ۲۱۹۲۰ -۱

Ibid, tr. no. ۲۱۹۲۴ -۲

Imam Dar Sangar-e Namaz, pp. ۱۲-۱۳ -۳

of wudu', and re-opens it (only) when it is necessary, to avoid any extra water to flow from the tap. This is while most of us do not have the smallest degree of attention .(toward the matter of israf (wastage

For example, from the time we intend to perform wudu', the tap is open until when our ablution is completed. Whenever Imam (Khumayni) wanted to perform wudu', he was very careful in using less water. This vigilance was witnessed in the most minor of his movements. He always performed ghusl (the Friday major ablution) before the call .of prayers at Friday noon, and his Friday ghusl was never left

Whenever the Imam performed wudu', he would perform all the parts of it facing the qibla. Even if the basin was not in the direction of the qibla, at every instance, after taking a handful of water, he closed the tap, and facing the qibla, washed his face or hand. Imam Khumayni, in accordance with his self-commitment and Islamic belief, .tried to practice whatever he preached

For example, if during wudu' he reminded one of his family members not to use water (more than necessary, he too carefully followed the same..." (١

Dr. Mahmud Burujardi

Imam Khumayni's son-in-law

'.C) 'It is not the time for an interview now

One day in Paris a person came and said: 'The Americans have come to take an" interview with Imam Khumayni, and this program shall be broadcasted live. If such an action transpires than naturally other European countries would follow suit, and this can be effective in revealing

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Ibid, pp. ١١-١٢ -١

'.the stances and movement of the revolution

Incidentally it was a Friday. I came to Imam Khumayni and informed him of the matter. He said: 'Now is the time of doing the recommended acts-the Friday ghusl, not the time for an interview.' When he had performed the recommended acts of Friday, (he said: 'I am ready for the interview.'" ١)

Ms. Marziyeh Hadidechi

On Prayer (٢

point

:Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلاهِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

,Be you watchful over the prayers

;And the middle prayer

(And stand obedient to God. (٢:٢٣٨

:The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said

افضل الاعمال عند الله الصلاه فى اول وقتها

"The best of deeds to Allah is prayer in the beginning of its time"

What follows are thought provoking memoirs of people who got the advantage to :observe great Muslim scholars at prayer time

A) A youth extremely observant of prayer time

Of the important distinguishing characteristics of Imam Khumayni was that he" always performed the prayer at the beginning of its time, and would give importance to the recommended prayers (nawafil) . This characteristic was present in him since .the beginning of his youth age, when he hadn't exceeded twenty years

Some friends used to say: "We thought in the beginning that God forbid, he performs his prayers at the beginning of its time, out of show off. For this very reason, we tried to do something that if this action was out of showiness, we stop the same. For a long .time we thought of it, and tried him several times in various ways

For example, exactly

Ibid, pg. ١۴ -١

at the beginning of the prayer time, we would spread the table cloth (for having our meals); or arrange to set out on a journey. However, he would say, 'You go on with '.your food, and I shall perform my prayers. I shall eat whatever remains

Or while leaving for a journey (at the beginning of the prayer time) he would say: 'You go ahead. I shall follow and reach you.' A long time had passed since this matter took place, and not only was his timely prayer not left, he (also) compelled us to perform ".our prayers at the beginning of its time

Muhammad `Abai

B) What imam al-Sadiq (`a) actually meant

The other issue was prayer at the beginning of its time, that he lay great importance" to. He would narrate a tradition from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq that said: 'If a person takes '.his prayer lightly, he shall be deprived of our intercession

Once I said to him: 'Taking prayers lightly may mean that a person sometimes performs his prayers, while sometimes he does not.' He said: 'No. This, rather, is against the religion. Imam al-Sadiq meant that when zuhr (noon) comes to transpire (for example), and the person does not perform his prayers at the beginning of the ".prayer time, he has in reality given preference to something else

Mahmud Burujardi

C) Prayers in Times of Great Difficulty

This refers to the time Imam Khumayni was captured by the forces of the Shah.):) "Imam (Khumayni) narrated the following to me: I had said on the way that I haven't ,performed my prayers. 'Stop at a place

so that I perform wudu'. They said: 'We do not have the permission to do so.' I said, 'But you are armed, while I do not have any weapon. Besides, you are all together, '.while I am alone; I cannot do anything

They said, 'We don't have the permission to do so.' I understood that there is no use (to go on explaining), and they shall not stop. I said, 'All right, at least stop so that I may do tayammum.' They listened to this and stopped the car. However, they did not give me the permission to come out. Whilst in the car, I bent myself and hit my hand .on the ground and performed tayammum

The prayer I offered was in the state of facing opposite the qiblah. This was because we were heading to Tehran from Qum, and the qiblah was at the South. It was a prayer recited with a tayyammum, opposite the qiblah and whilst the car was moving. This is how I prayed my subh (dawn) prayers. Maybe these two units of my prayers ".pleases God

Farideh Mustafawi

D) Indeed Such Are Moments When the True Believers Are Clearly Deciphered

In one of the gatherings where, Hadhrat Ayatullah Khamenei, as the President of the" time was also present. Also among those present were Agha Rafsanjani (the president of the parliament), the Commanders of the Revolutionary guards, other .forces, and I, who was there as the commander of the land forces

The gathering took place in the small room of the Imam. He was seated on a chair and

we sat on the ground in front of him in a circle. I do not remember whose turn it was .to deliver a report, that suddenly the Imam left the room

Imam's confrontation was extremely shocking to us. The reporter could not finish what he was saying, for he was astounded and astonished as to what should he say and to whom should he address. (Thereafter) the first one to speak was Agha '?Rafsanjani, who said: 'Agha, are you feeling unwell

Imam Khumayni returned quickly and cleanly said, 'No; It is the time for prayer.' I looked at my watch unconsciously. I knew the prayer time of Tehran beforehand, and can (confidently) say that the time of Imams leave for the purpose of prayer had no difference of even a minute with it ...In reality, the Imam's state of worship was such that he could not pay attention to what the reporter said moments before the ".beginning of prayer time

The Martyr 'Ali Sayyad Shirazi

E) In Front Of All the Reporters Love Of The Beloved Gives Him No Respite

The Day when Shah escaped, we were in Neauphle-le-Chateau in Paris. The French" police had closed the main highway of Neauphle-le-Chateau; all the news-reporters of different countries of the world were present. The foreign news-reporters from Africa, Asia, Europe and America, and probably ۱۵۰ cameras just broadcasted the .Imam's speech

Believe it that the news-reporters numbered as such, because they were reporting .about the greatest event of the year

The Shah had gone, and they wanted to know Imam Khumayni's decision. Khumayni stood on a chair near the

highway, and all the cameras were focused at him. He spoke for a few minutes and said what he wanted to say. I was standing beside the Imam. Suddenly, he faced me '?and said: 'Ahmad, has the midday come to transpire

I said: 'Yes, it is midday now.' Imam Khumayni, without any fear, bade them off as follows: 'Wassalamu...' Look at what moment did he leave his speech to perform his .prayer at the beginning of its time

That is, at such a sensitive moment when International Television Broadcasting Stations, which have millions of viewers, such as the C.N.N., the B.B.C. London, all the television channels of London and America, all the news-reporters such as the Associated Press, the United Press, Reuters, and all the reporters of (the different) news-papers, magazines and radio-television stations were present, Imam cut his ".conversation and went after his prayer

Sayyid Ahmad Khumayni Late son of Imam Khumayni

F) Imam is Informed of Martyr Rajai's Decision

That which Imam Khumayni highly emphasized, and showed great sensitivity" towards was prayer at the beginning of its time. My father would say also, that ever since his adolescence and youth age he (Imam Khumayni) used to pray at the beginning of prayer time. If you remember, during the beginning of the victory of the ,revolution

Martyr Raja’i, introduced a law that the ministries and governmental organizations should remain closed for half an hour for prayer. This issue was very interesting and lesson-giving. When it was asked from Imam Khumayni concerning his opinion on this :matter, he said

".(If it does not cause harm to the time and work of anybody, do it (as suggested'

Dr. Mahmud Burujardi Son-in-law of Imam Khumayni

G) What Kind Of Lover Was This Who Even In That State Never Forgot The Only Beloved

The time was ten minutes to eight when they brought Agha to the C.C.U. I whispered" near the Imam's ears: 'Agha, it is the time for prayer; should Mr. Ansari come, so that you (can) perform wudu?' Imam Khumayni made a sign with his eye-brows. Dr. Ilyasi said: 'Agha is listening to everything, but cannot reply.' That is when I saw the Imam pointing with the fore-finger of his right hand, and we thought that he is performing ".his prayers

Mustafa Kaff-ashzadeh

'.'H) 'It should not happen that the sun rises and I have to pray qada

One night before his demise, I was near him (Imam Khumayni) in the hospital from" ۱۰.۰۰ p.m. to ۵.۰۰ a.m. in the morning. He woke up several times from his sleep and asked for water. When I brought juice for him, he said: 'Give me natural water.' He did not take fruit juice. He also asked about the time a number of times; and continually "'.said: 'It should not happen that the sun rises and I have to pray qada

Husayn Sulaymani

?I) Who is this angelic figure who is so particular of the time of meeting his only beloved

The very same day he (Imam Khumayni) prayed his zuhr and asr prayers with wudu'." From an hour before noon, he asked whoever came to him: 'How much time is left for mid-day?' And his aim (behind this) was that he should not delay in praying at the beginning of its time. From ۳.۳۰ afternoon an overwhelming anxiety overcame all (of .(us

The treatment had reached at

a point when, following utmost efforts by the physicians and the Hospital personnel, everyone was in wait for a miracle to transpire. During Maghrib, the doctors, considering their awareness of his sensitivity toward prayers, called him and said: '.'Agha, it is time for prayer

Imam Khumayni, who was unconscious from ۱.۳۰ afternoon, attended to this voice. All of us witnessed that he prayed his Maghrib prayer in that state of restlessness by ".moving his hands and eyebrows

Firishte I'rabi

J) Regaining Consciousness by The Mention Of Prayer

He (Imam Khumayni) loved performing his prayer at the beginning of its time. Even in" his last day, he prayed the prayer of Maghrib and 'Isha' by means of signs at ۱۰.۰۰ p.m. He was in the state of unconsciousness when one of the doctors came besides him and, with the likelihood that probably by means of (mentioning) prayer Agha could be '.brought into consciousness, he said: 'Agha, it is time for prayer

The moment he said this, Imam regained his consciousness and performed his prayer with signs of his hand. In the morning of that day too, he would always ask us: 'How much time is left for midday?', because he had no watch with him, and had no strength to look at the watch; after every ۱۵ minutes he would ask us (the time), not because his prayer should not be prayed outside its time, but because of performing ".prayer at the beginning of its time

Na'ime Ishraqi

?K) How can you snatch the cup of divine love from the intoxicated

He (Imam Khumayni) always prayed at the beginning of the prayer time, and advised" his

children the same. I remember that in the beginning of the war (Iraq-Iran imposed .war), a gathering was held with some presidents and officials, both local and foreign

When there was a call for prayer, Imam Khumayni without paying attention to the others, stood up and performed his prayer at the beginning of its time, and those present (also) prayed behind him. And in that very period, not only did he recite the ٨ .units of nafila prayers of zuhr, but also prayed the ٨ units of nafila prayers of `asr

During the days when he was in the hospital, prior to the call of midday prayer, he would ask: 'How much time is left for the call of zuhr prayer?' And in the middle of the night too he would ask: 'How much time is left for the call of subh prayer?' so that he may recite his nafilah prayers. The time he left this mortal world too, the last moments of his life was together with the word of prayer. Even when he regained consciousness, the first sentence he pronounced was Allahu Akbar (Allah is great than ".(what is attributed to Him

Ayatullah Muhammad Rida Tawassuli

'.L) 'Take back the food, so that I perform prayer

The day when he (Imam Khumayni) was transferred to the hospital, he requested" that he should be informed about the time for midday and afternoon prayer; and he would pray at the beginning of the prayer time and then take his meal. One day he suddenly noticed that the plate of food was brought

.inside the room

He asked: 'Do you mean that it is time for prayer?' Those present said: 'Yes, it is prayer time.' Imam, facing them said in an angry tone: 'Why then didn't you wake me up?' They said: 'Due to your particular unfavorable state, we did not want to wake you up.' Once again, he said with disappointment: 'Why do you deal with me in such a way? Take back the food, so that I perform my prayer! '"

Mahdi Imam Jamarani

M) Great Stations Attained By Praying at the Beginning of Prayer Time

This narrative is from a contemporary scholar and a student of the contemporary) master of philosophy- Ayatullah Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi): "I asked him (my teacher- Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi) :

What is the correct and balanced program of worship for a seeker of knowledge in your opinion?' He said with his ever humble attitude: 'I feel ashamed to talk about this, .for I myself am greatly deprived of the same

However, I have heard things from great people, of which I shall narrate: ...The late `Allamah Tabatabai and Ayatullah Behjat (a contemporary Shi'ah Gnostic presently residing in Qum-Iran) quoted Ayatullah Qadi (the teacher of `Allamah Tabatabai in `irfan), as saying: If a person prays the obligatory prayers at the beginning of its time and does not attain lofty stations, he should curse me! (or, he said: he should spit at my face!)" (1)

(2)The beginning of prayer time is a great secret! Safeguard your prayers (

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ

(3)(Hafizu 'ala salawatikum) is itself a point other than (

واقيموا الصلاه'

Establish the prayer' fact that

۱- This decision is mentioned in the book. It is not by the translator

۲- Holy Qur'an, ۲:۲۳۸

۳- Holy Qur'an, ۲:۴۳

man gives importance and binds himself to perform prayer at the beginning of its time in itself has many effects, even if the prayer is not performed with the presence of (heart (and concentration). (١)

Shaykh Muhsin Gharawiyyan

The Hereafter (٣

point

والله ماناخاف عليكم الا البرزخ

I swear by Allah, I do not fear for you except in barzakh

(Imam al-Sadiq (`a) (٢)

If great authorities of gnosis (`irfan), who had already purified their inner selves and entirely sacrificed their lives for the sake of human salvation, believed that migration to the next world- the intermediate realm (barzakh) is difficult, what should those like the author, who have drowned themselves in the mundane pleasures of the world, ?express

.Following are some narratives worthy of reflection

a) I Have No Action to My Credit

The night before he left for the hospital where he was to pass the last moments of his) life, the late Imam Khumayni was in the company of Fatima Tabatabai - his daughter-in-law - among other relatives. The latter narrates the following conversation, which (:took place after Imam Khumayni had eaten very little of his dinner

Imam said: 'Now I have one or two advices for you: I shall not return. However, I" don't want you to express grief and anxiety on my demise. I am asking God to give you patience. Be careful not to weep and lament. This is what I had to say.' I and Khanum (the wife of Imam Khumayni) were present; I do not recollect exactly; I think Zahra Khanum Ishraqi was (also) present. I don't know whether someone else was

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۱- Muhsin Gharawiyyan, Dar Mahzare Buzurgan, (A Persian treatise on the Memoirs of saints contemporary to the author), p. ۹۹

۲- Muhammad al-Ray Shahri, Mizan al-Hikma, new ed., vol. ۱, pg. ۲۵۲, tr. ۱۶۸۱

.present or not

It was difficult for us to listen to this issue; all of us had turned sad. Khanum said: 'No, Agha, God Willing, you will recover...' He (Imam Khumayni) said: 'No, I will not return. However, let me tell you this: to go (to the next world) is very difficult; to go (to the next world) is very difficult.' I (Fatimah Tabatabai) said: 'Agha, If you say all this, then we shall greatly lose our hopes. This is because, as far as I know, although I am young, those who have been with you narrate that not only have you performed all the obligatory deeds, and abstained from the forbidden ones, you have also observed the recommended acts and even abstained from most of the unpleasant deeds .((makruhat

If it is really difficult for you also, then what should we say? We get greatly despondent'. He said: 'No, you must not despair from God's Mercy; (۱) this itself is the (greatest sin ... (۲

However, bear this in mind that to go (to the next world) is very difficult; I do not have any (good) deed, so that I should want to be happy thereby.' I said: 'But Agha, these words that you utter are very difficult for us to bear, for if it is as such, we are extremely frightened, worried and upset.' He said: 'It is really as such. If Hadrat Sajjad "(`a) wept and said: "O Lord it is likely that my good deeds are bad

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۱ - The Holy Qur'an (۳۹:۵۴) says: Say: O My servants who have been extravagant against yourselves, do not despair of Allah's Mercy; surely Allah forgives sins altogether. Surely, He is the All-forgiving, the All-compassionate. The Holy Quran (۱۵:۵۶) also says: He said, 'And who despairs of the Mercy of his Lord, excepting those '?that are astray

۲ - Iman 'Ali ('a) is reported to have once told a person, whom fear had made to despair, due to the ampleness of his sins: `O you! Your despondency of Allah's Merry is worse than your sins.' (Jami al Sa'adat, Mawla Muhammad Mahdi al-Naraqi, vol. ۱, (pg. ۲۴۷

?do I possess a deed to get happy and confident thereby ,(۱)

I only have hope of God's Graces and have no (action) at my credit to be hopeful...; and to go (to the next world) is very difficult; to go (to the next world) is very (difficult.(۲)' The doctors then came, and Imam (Khumayni) said: 'It is time to leave.' (۳

Fatima Tabataba'I, The daughter-in-law of Imam Khumayni

الصراط ادق من الشعره واحد من السيف

'.The path (sirat) is finer than the hair and sharper than the sword'

(Imam al-Sadiq (`a) (۴

B) The Task is Very Difficult

Not very long before his demise, the late son of Imam Khumayni, Hujjatu 'l Islam Haj) Sayyid Ahmad Khumayni, dreamt of his father. He narrates: "I saw Imam Khumayni in my dream. He said to me: 'Tell your friends that I (have already) crossed the straight (path (sirat). However, the task is very difficult.'" (۵

The Late Hujjatu'l Islam Sayyid Ahmad Khumayni The late son of Imam Khumayni

Extreme Chastity (۴

point

:Allah (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

,Say to the believers

That they cast down their eyes

;And guard their private parts

.That is purer for them

(Allah is aware of the things they work. (6)

The Late Ayatollah Mar'ashi's Extreme Chastity

This narration is from a student of the late Ayatollah Shahab al Din Mar'ashi, who at present ranks among the esteemed tutors of the Islamic Seminary in Qum.). "During his (Late Ayatollah Mar'ashi's) old age, I had observed several times that on entering the holy shrine of Hadrat Ma'suma (`a)

p: ۴۹

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۱ - This also refers to what Imam al-Husayn (`a) says in his famous supplication of `Arafah. He says: 'O God, one whose good deeds are bad, how can his bad deeds not be bad?' (Mafatih al Jinan, Du'a al-'Arafah, Imam al-Husayn (A), compiler- Marhum Shaykh Abbas Qummi).

۲- The Holy Prophet (s) is reported to have said: 'Know that no one of you will be saved by his action, including me; except if Allah's Merry and Grace were to cover me.' ((Mizan al-Hikmah, Muhammad al-Ray Shahri, new ed., vol.۳, pg. ۲۱۳۱

۳ - Fasl-e Sabr, Memoirs of the days of Imam's illness and demise by the team of physicians and those affiliated to Imam Khumayni, pp. ۸۳-۸۴.

۴- Mizan al-Hikmah, Muhammad al-Ray Shahri, new ed., vol. ۲, pg. ۱۶۱۰, tr. ۱۰۴۸۱

۵- Dalil-e Aftab, Memoirs of the Reminder of Imam Khumayni, pg. ۱۶۹.

۶- Holy Qur'an, Surat an-Nur (۲۴), verse ۳۰

for teaching or praying, and noticing the apparition of a woman from far, he would raise his cloak above his face, so that his eyes do not even fall once at a ghayr mahram woman. I observed this from him as an established habit".(١)

Hujjatu'l Islam al-Sayyid `Adil al-`Alawi: A contemporary scholar in Qum

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p: ۵۱

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

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